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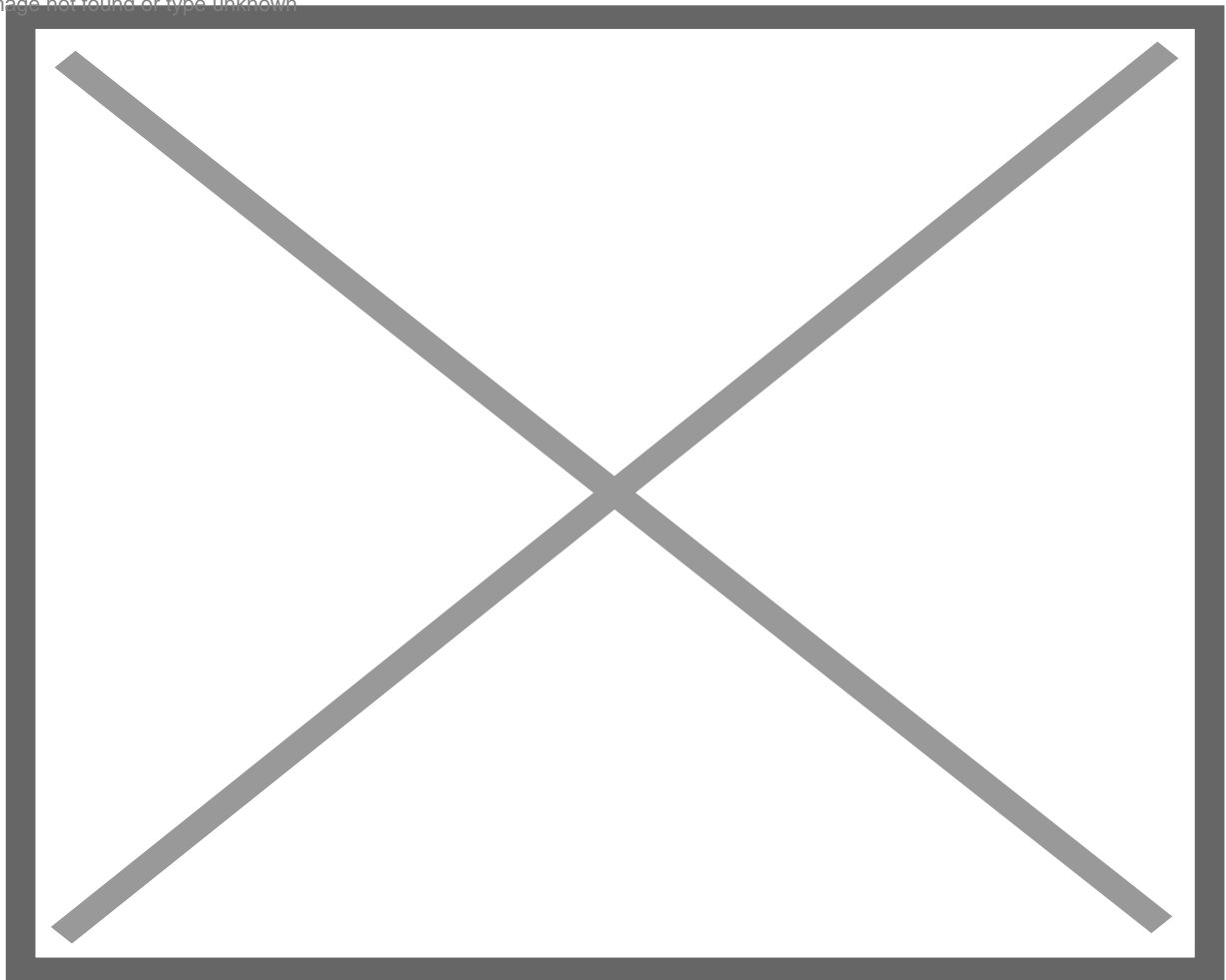
Flu Activity on the Rise Across the U.S., Including Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico witnesses increased flu activity amid nationwide uptick

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Downtown Puerto Rico on a Sunny Day. By. GETTY IMAGES

In Puerto Rico, flu activity has been on the rise, mirroring a nationwide trend observed in several U.S. states, according to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

This increase comes as a part of the broader pattern seen across the country, with states like New York City, Arkansas, California, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas also experiencing heightened flu cases. Alaska, known for its high flu activity in recent weeks, was not included in the latest statistics due to a lack of data reporting.

The flu season's tracking is partly based on individuals with flu-like symptoms seeking medical care, though many flu cases remain unconfirmed due to a lack of testing. The presence of Covid-19 and other respiratory viruses adds complexity to accurately tracking flu trends.

Alicia Budd, the head of the CDC's flu surveillance team, notes that multiple indicators point towards ongoing increases in flu activity. The predominant flu virus strain circulating this year generally causes fewer hospitalizations and deaths among the elderly, typically the most affected group.

Nationally, the CDC estimates significant flu activity this fall, with at least 780,000 flu illnesses, 8,000 hospitalizations, and 490 flu-related deaths, including at least one child. Budd mentioned that the current flu vaccines' effectiveness is still being evaluated, although they seem well-suited to the strains in circulation. About 35% of U.S. adults and 33% of children have been vaccinated against the flu, a decrease from last year.

Flu vaccination rates in the U.S. are higher than those for Covid-19 and RSV. Approximately 14% of adults and 5% of children have received the recommended Covid-19 vaccine, while around 13.5% of adults aged 60 and above have received the new RSV vaccines available earlier this year.